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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2459

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DECAPTIONED

E.O. 12065: RDS 9/19/85 (CHAPLIN, MAXWELL) OR-M
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: [REDACTED] CLANDESTINE PRISONERS

REF: STATE 240799

1. [REDACTED]- ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMENTS ON SOME OF THE SPECIFIC POINTS
RAISED IN REFTEL:

--- THE GIORGI CASE: SUBSEQUENT TO BUENOS AIRES 6627 WE
HAVE CONFIRMED THAT AZZAN REPORTEDLY CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN
GIORIGI IN PRISON IN NOVEMBER 1978, NOT MID-JULY 1979.

--- PUENTE DOCE AND PAZ-RICCIERI ARE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATIONS
ON THE ROAD TO EZEIZA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, THE FORMER
A BRIDGE AND THE LATTER AN INTERSECTION OF GENERAL PAZ AVENUE AND

RICCIERI HIGHWAY (THE AIRPORT ROAD). THEY
ARE LOCATED WITHIN A FEW KILOMETERS OF EACH OTHER. IN
THE GENERAL VICINITY OF THESE LANDMARKS, THERE ARE SEVERAL
MILITARY AND POLICE FACILITIES INCLUDING THE LA TABLADA
BARRACKS; A TRANSIT POLICE HEADQUARTERS; AND A GENDARMERIE
FACILITY; AND FURTHER ON, CLOSER TO THE AIRPORT, THERE

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IS A RECOGNIZED DETENTION CENTER FOR MEN AND FOR WOMEN.
THUS, FURTHER QUERIES ARE NECESSARY WHEN SOURCES SPEAK

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny
Exemption(s): _____
Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full
☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to _____
Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

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OF "PUENTE DOCE" OR "PAZ-RICCHIERI" TO GET THEM TO BE MORE SPECIFIC AS TO THE FACILITY THEY ARE REPORTING ABOUT.

---THE ONLY SPECIFIC CASE WE KNOW OF DIRECTLY FROM A FAMILY SOURCE IN WHICH CLANDESTINE PRISONERS REPORTEDLY

MAINTAINED CONTACT WITH FAMILY MEMBERS FROM LATE 1977 UNTIL EARLY 1979 IS THAT OF MARCELO WEISZ AND HIS WIFE SUSANA GONZALES DE WIESZ. (REPORTEDLY IN THIS CASE, THE WEISZES BROKE CONTACT WITH THEIR FAMILY IN ABOUT JANUARY OF THIS YEAR.) WE HAVE SECONDARY PIECES OF INFORMATION FROM SOURCES TELLING US THEY HAVE HEARD OF OTHER CASES OF CONTINUING CONTACT BUT IN THESE CASES THE SOURCES DID NOT THEMSELVES HAVE PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF SUCH CONTACTS. MRS. JARA DE CABEZAS REPORTEDLY REGULARLY PHONED HER FAMILY AT LEAST THROUGH MID-AUGUST. WE CAN ONLY SPECULATE ON WHY THE WEISZ CONNECTIONS WERE BROKEN. SEVERAL VERY DIFFERENT SCENARIOS ARE THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE: THEY ARE BEING HELD CLANDESTINELY; THEY WERE KILLED; THEY WERE SENT OUT OF THE COUNTRY ON THE CONDITION THAT THEY NOT TALK TO ANYONE; THEY ARE "TURN AROUNDS" ON A CLANDESTINE MISSION FOR A GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCE, ETC.

---THE SOURCE IN THE ARMY INTELLIGENCE UNIT THAT IS

QUOTED IN PARA 3 REFTTEL IS OF MIXED RELIABILITY. HIS ACCESS TO INFORMATION IS LIMITED IF ONLY BECAUSE OF THE COMPARTMENTALIZATIONS THAT PREVAILS AMONG THE INTELLIGENCE

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SERVICES. IN LATE 1978 AN OFFICER OF THE EMBASSY WAS TOLD BY THIS SOURCE THAT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN 500 CLANDESTINE PRISONERS AT THAT TIME, MANY OF THEM COLLABORATORS. THE SOURCE STATED AT THAT TIME THAT HE WAS MAKING A GUESS IN GIVING THIS FIGURE BECAUSE HE HAD NO SOLID INFORMATION. SUBSEQUENTLY, THIS SAME SOURCE TOLD OTHER OFFICERS THAT THERE COULD BE 200 PRISONERS IN CLANDESTINE CAMPS, MANY OF THEM COLLABORATORS. THIS 200 FIGURE TOO WAS

GIVEN AS A GUESTIMATE RATHER THAN A HARD FACT. THE SOURCE'S TWO DIFFERENT FIGURES PRESUMABLY REFLECT HIS PERSONAL ASSESSMENT RATHER THAN CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF AN ACTUAL REDUCTIONS IN THE NUMBER BASED ON SUCH CONSIDERATIONS AS

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THE CLOSING DOWN OF CERTAIN CLANDESTINE FACILITIES, THE VAST REDUCTIONS IN RECENT INPUTS INTO THE SYSTEM, ETC.

--- THE EMBASSY'S REFERENCE TO SECONDARY REPORTS ON CLANDESTINE CENTERS EXISTING AFTER 1977 WAS AN ALLUSION TO THE MANY SUCH REPORTS WE HAVE RECEIVED. SOME OF

THEM ARE MORE OR LESS CREDIBLE: THE GIORGI CASE'S REFERENCE TO A CENTER AT THE NAVAL MECHANICS SCHOOL; A RECORD OF AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN AN AMERICAN NEWSMAN AND AN ARGENTINE WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN HELD IN AN

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UNIDENTIFIED DETENTION CENTER, A CLAIM SUSTAINED BY A GOOD DEAL OF CONVINCING DETAIL. OTHER REPORTS ARE LESS CREDIBLE: E.G. A LETTER SIGNED WITH A FALSE NAME AND ADDRESS ALLEGING VAST NUMBERS OF CAMPS. SOME REPORTS BECOME CREDIBLE BECAUSE THEY COME FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES, ALL OF WHICH INDICATE THE PRESENCE OF A CAMP AT A SPECIFIC SITE: THE NAVAL MECHANICS SCHOOL; THE FACILITY OR FACILITIES NEAR THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. AND OFR THE REASONS WE GAVE IN REF A WE BELIEVE THAT MOST CAMPS WERE PHASED OUT BEGINNING IN 1978. THAT SOME SORT OF CLANDESTINE FACILITIES CONTINUED TO EXIST--FOR COLLABORATORS, FOR ALL WHO ARE ARRESTED, ETC.--IS CLEAR. WE CAN BASE THAT CONCLUSION ON PUBLIC EVIDENCE: THE NUMBER OF DISAPPEARED IN A GIVEN PERIOD WHO LATER REAPPEAR EITHER UNDER PEN OR OTHERWISE. IN 1978 FOR EXAMPLE, OUR RECORDS SHOW APPROXIMATELY 20 PEOPLE WHO DISAPPEARED DURING THE YEAR WHO REAPPEARED IN PEN AFTER A DELAY OF FROM ONE MONTH TO ONE YEAR, IN 1979,

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THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1, 53 PEOPLE DISAPPEARED OF WHICH 20 REAPPEARED, EITHER UNDER PEN OR FREE (OR IN ONE CASE DEAD), AFTER PERIODS WHICH IN NO CASE WERE MORE THAN ONE MONTH, AND FREQUENTLY MUCH LESS.

3. THE MATTER OF CLANDESTINE PRISONS REMAINS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR US. WE BELIEVE THAT THEY CONTINUE TO EXIST

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FOR SMALL NUMBERS OF PRISONERS: IF ANY OF THE AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1979 DISAPPEARINGS ARE STILL BEING HELD THEY MUST BE IN SOME SORT OF FACILITY. GUARDED BY SECRECY AND THE SUBJECT OF ENDLESS SPECULATION, SUCH CENTERS ARE ONE OF THE MOST MYSTERIOUS ASPECTS OF THE ARGENTINE SECURITY SYSTEM. WE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK RELIABLE INFORMATION ON THEM AND REPORT AS IT BECOMES AVAILABLE.
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